



American Girl®

September/October 1997

\$3.95

aha!

*Great Gizmos by
Girl Inventors*

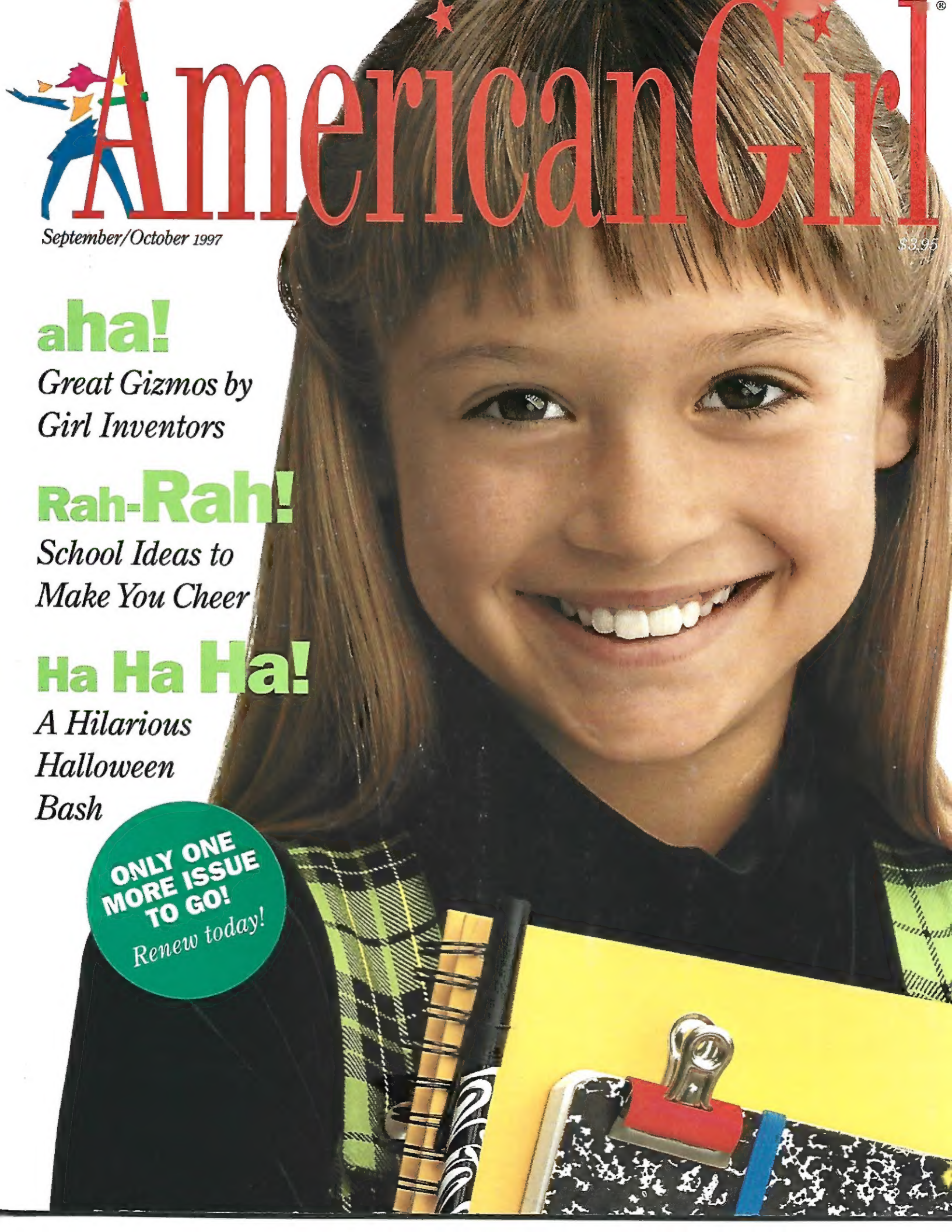
Rah-Rah!

*School Ideas to
Make You Cheer*

Ha Ha Ha!

*A Hilarious
Halloween
Bash*


ONLY ONE
MORE ISSUE
TO GO!
Renew today!



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Stephanie Garrard

Find-Its! 

Look for the fun
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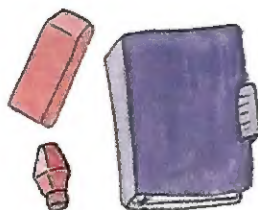
American Girl®

Celebrating Girls, Yesterday and Today



**Why Didn't I
Think of That?**
Gadgets and gizmos
invented by girls

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Fifth-Grade Blues

Read more about
Amelia—in the pages
of her trusty notebook.

10



On the Cover

Meet Courtney
O'Brien, age 10.

The best bus rides
are on field trips, says
Courtney, "when the
whole class goes on the
bus together. The best
seat is the backseat!"

Courtney O'Brien

Letters from You



Fishing for Daisies



I really liked "Go Daisy Crazy" in the May/June issue. My thread broke when I tried it, so I used fishing line. You can get it anywhere, it's durable, you don't need a needle, and it fits through even tiny bead holes!

Shannon Martin

Age 11, New Jersey

What Really Matters



I'm writing in response to Too Fat in the May/June issue's Help! I can't believe what people in the U.S. are doing to girls these days! Everyone thinks she's ugly or fat. I really hope Too Fat is able to stop caring about her weight and can start paying attention to all of the good things in life.

Emily Breenhalgh

Age 11, California

Memories of Dad



When I saw "Father's Day Every Day," I was sad because my dad died. But I felt better after reading the article. It reminded me of how my dad

made me laugh, how much fun we had together, and how much we loved each other. Thank you.

Cady Payne

Age 10, Wisconsin

Something New!



I just wanted to know where the story about one of the American Girls went. Have you stopped publishing them? Will you put them back? I really like them!

Claire Fratnyek

Age 11, California

Don't worry, we haven't stopped publishing stories about The American Girls Collection®. In fact, in this issue we're introducing the newest character—Josefina™! We'll publish AGC stories a few times a year, alternating with stories about other girls we think you'll love.

And in honor of our fifth birthday, we've made other changes, too.

The adventures of Amelia will now appear in every issue (page 10).

You can submit stories, photos, and poems to Friendship File (page 40), a celebration of you and your pals.

And you can enter a contest every issue (page 42). Tell us what you think about our changes!

American Girl



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Elaine Leonard, Julie Mierkiewicz,
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CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Samantha Bonar, Cathryn Harding, Candace Purdom



SPECIAL THANKS TO
Jane Amini, Barb Babcock, Diane Baker,
Sally Paulis Beck, Rebecca Bernstein, Cheryl Cox,
Carolyn Crimi, Mary Davison, Suzi Galloway,
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Winner of a 1996
Parents' Choice
Gold Award



EdPress



The National
Magazine
Awards



The National
Magazine
Awards

Girls Express



Buzzword

American girls everywhere will be using this buzzword this season:

elucidate

How to say it: ee-LOO-sih-date

What it means: to explain

Where it comes from: *Elucidate* is based on the Latin word *lucidus*, meaning "bright." If you explain something, you are shedding light on the subject!

One way to use it: "Tameka stood up to elucidate her answer to the history question."



The buzzword is tucked somewhere into this issue of *American Girl*. Can you find it?

Principal for a Day

Last October, Linh Tran was sent to the principal's office. But she wasn't in trouble—she was reporting for work! Linh, age 10, got to be principal for a day at her California school.

Linh was shocked and excited when her name was drawn from a hat and she learned that she and the principal would exchange places for a day. She immediately got busy making new rules. First she decided that her day in power would be a free-dress day—no uniforms required! She also lengthened recess and ordered ice cream for every class. But Linh's big day wasn't all fun and games. She also distributed teachers' schedules, visited each class, and helped parent volunteers.

Linh would rather be a veterinarian than a principal when she grows up. But being in charge had its rewards. Her final act was to declare no homework could be assigned that night!

Linh looks right at home in the principal's chair. But seeing the principal at Linh's desk "was pretty funny. She really stood out," says Linh.





Moneymaker

"Here's an idea I've been using for years—selling homemade postcards! Trace around a postcard on white poster board. Cut the postcard out.

"On one side draw a nice, colorful picture. On the other side draw a vertical line down the middle of the card. On the right side of the line, draw a square the size of a stamp in the upper right-hand corner. Sell your cards for 10 or 20 cents to neighbors, friends, and everyone else."

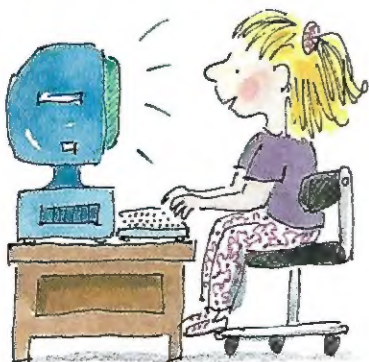
Robyn Bailey
Age 13, Ohio

Visit AG Online!

Can't get enough of *American Girl*? If you have a computer and access to the Internet at school or home, take a look at *American Girl's* Web site: <http://www.americangirl.com>

It's full of activities for every day of the week, articles to read, even Help! questions you can answer yourself.

We may use ideas you send us online in the magazine! If we do, instead of your signature, we'll print your name like this: *Julie :-)* Happy surfing!



Volunteer Visitors

When Kristen DeForrest's grandmother died last year, she realized she wasn't the only one who was sad. "My grandfather lives alone now and he's very lonely," says Kristen, age 12.

"I started thinking, 'What if there are more people like that?'"

So Kristen created the Adopt an Elder program, matching kids from her school in Massachusetts with senior citizens. Her plan was awarded \$3,000 in a contest sponsored by Brigham's Ice Cream and Restaurants.

Each week, Kristen's 25-kid crew visits the homes of seniors who are patients at a local rehabilitation center. Kristen says that from the beginning, the seniors "were all smiles and started talking right away."

Her elder pal is a woman, but Kristen never forgets her own grandfather. "He was the one who planted the whole thing in my mind," Kristen explains. "Whenever I see him now, he asks me how it's going."

Kristen with her grandfather, Edgar DeForrest, who inspired her project. "It makes me feel good that I'm doing something to help someone else," she says.



Grandparents Are Great!

We'd like to hear about the creative and fun things you do to keep in touch with your grandparents, whether they live nearby or far away.

Do you send a monthly package of school papers so they know what you're up to? Do you play cards every Sunday? Tell us what you do, why you like it, and what makes your grandparent or grandparents special. Send your answers and ideas to the address on page 6.



Star Siblings

When she was little, Tonya Callahan spent hours in her yard scrambling after her brother Shawn's football passes. Today, the Missouri siblings make quite a team.

Tonya, 11, and Shawn, 14, are the first brother-and-sister winners in the National Football League's Punt, Pass, and Kick competition. At last winter's finals—part of which was held at a jam-packed NFL game—they drop-kicked, passed, and kicked footballs off a tee. Tonya won the division for girls age 10 to 11, while Shawn took first among boys age 14 to 15.

Although Tonya plays basketball and softball, she's never been on a football team. But she encourages girls to get out and try the sport. This was the first year for a girls' division in Punt, Pass, and Kick. "More girls could get into it," says Tonya. "Tell them to go for it!"



Local Punt, Pass, and Kick contests start in September. For information, call 1-800-NFL-SNAP.

True Story

Kids prove it's easy to break a law—and then change it for the better!

Dear American Girl,

I'm in a group at Elm Place Middle School called Problem Solving. One thing we do is try to solve a problem in our city. My team chose underage smoking.

We performed an undercover sting, where a 12-year-old and a 15-year-old were videotaped going into stores and buying cigarettes. The legal age for buying cigarettes is 18. About 70 percent of stores sold cigarettes to underage kids without asking them for identification.

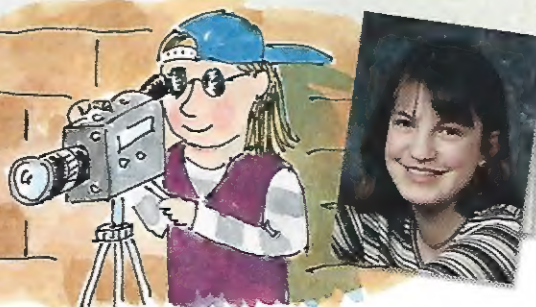
We went to the mayor and told him about our project, and then we talked to the city council. We were in the newspaper 32 times, and a story about our project was even on CNN.

The publicity got people involved, and we got a lot of support. A few months later a law was passed in our city that makes it almost impossible for underage kids to buy cigarettes. It taught us that when you work together, even kids can do big things!

Sincerely,

Erin Poque

Age 12, Illinois



AG

POLL



Your answers:

We asked how you like your Halloween costumes—funny, frightening or fancy. The answer? You'd rather leave them laughing!

Silly: 994

Spooky: 819

Pretty: 209

Next question:

Do you play a musical instrument?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, what do you play?

A. Piano or other keyboard

B. Woodwind (flute, clarinet, oboe, saxophone)

C. Strings (guitar, violin, cello)

D. Brass (trumpet, tuba, trombone, French horn)

E. Percussion (drum, triangle, xylophone)

F. Other:



Cut out your answers and mail them to us.

Send all your answers, letters, ideas, and tips to:

American Girl

8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53562

Or send us answers via e-mail at readermail@ag.pleasantco.com

Be sure to include your name and birthday—date, month, and year.



Do you have any “life rules”—unofficial rules you try to follow that make life more fun or just make you happy? Some examples: Never pass a lemonade stand without buying. Always share your last piece of gum with a friend. Never pass a fountain without making a wish. Tell us one of your life rules. If you don’t have one, make up one you’d like to follow!



Cut out your answers and mail them to us.



Get ready to write! It's time for *American Girl's* annual story contest. Here are the rules.

1 Somewhere in your story, you must use this sentence: "She pedaled so hard, her legs ached." Sorry, no stories about characters from The American Girls Collection are allowed.

2 The story should be no longer than eight handwritten pages or three typed pages.

3 Include your name, address, phone number, and birth date. A parent must sign your story and state that you wrote it yourself.



4 Mail your story by November 1, 1997, to Story Contest, *American Girl*, 8400 Fairway Place, Middleton, WI 53562. Winners will appear in the May/June 1998 issue.

Mini items of all kinds are dangling from key chains these days! You'll find these in gift and stationery stores. Prices may vary.



Honey-I-shrunk-the-sundae
Infomate, Inc., \$2



Dainty ducky
Basic Fun, \$3.50



Peewee pad
Infomate, Inc., \$2



Mini harmonica
Schylling, \$3.50



Itty Etch-A-Sketch
Basic Fun, \$3.50



Bitty blade
Infomate, Inc., \$2

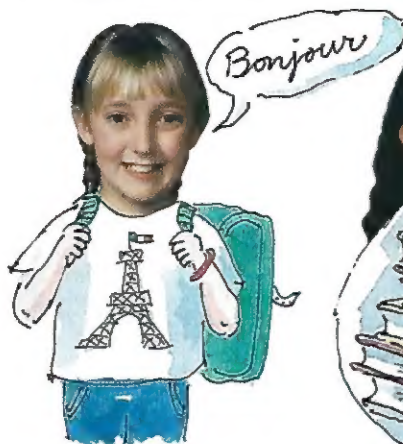
Photos: Mike Walker

What's in That Pack?

Girls told us what was in their backpacks, and we picked four crazy lists. Can you match these girls with the contents of their packs?



Hila Drora
Age 12, Florida



Ann Nelson
Age 10, Texas



Heather Creek
Age 13, Colorado



Elise Dudley
Age 9, Arizona

1. Troll with no hair

- Elf ears
- Pink rabbit's foot
- Paris sweatshirt
- Halloween eraser ring
- Uncooked beans
- Wallet
- Recorder
- Hairbrush

2. Lisa Frank folder

- Walkie-talkie
- Little House in the Big Woods
- Owl mask
- Red uniform sweater
- Tootsie Pop
- Broken silver clip
- Homework folder

3. Toy dog named Kylie

- Doodle paper
- Writing pad
- Drawings
- Candy wrappers
- My baby teeth that fell out
- Money

4. Puppy-dog earmuffs

- Popsicle stick with face glued on
- Map to the largest library in the state
- Instructions for huge social studies interview
- Purple swimsuit

The Bottomless Backpack

I opened up my backpack
To see what was in there.
Some pencils,
And some paper,
And don't forget the chair,
A lion with a big huge mane,
Some elephants
Who were very tame,
A notebook,
And some penguins, too,
A candy wrapper,
And some glue,

Some weewawas,
And some weewawats.
Don't ask me what they are.
They just came like that.
My backpack is not big
Nor small.
How did they fit in?
(Or did they at all?)

Kate Bowley
Age 11, Colorado



Answers: 1. Ann Nelson 2. Elise Dudley 3. Hila Drora 4. Heather Creek

School Daze

Do you dread facing another school day? What can you do if you think school is a snore?



I used to not like school much.

I got into trouble

because I always talked. When I stopped talking and listened, school became fun. My worst subject was math. Now it is easy because I listen.



Courtney Murphy

Age 11, Iowa



I dislike school because I know it could be more

fun. For example, in math we don't do hands-on stuff. My parents are teachers and they show me lots of activities that make math exciting. Teachers should stop the chalk and involve kids in activities.

Ali Silbeld

Age 9, New York



When I was in third grade, I thought school

was fun, but as I got older I did not like it as much. I thought it was my classmates or teachers. My mom said it wasn't—it was the work. Now I understand that schoolwork gets harder as you grow up. Don't let this affect the way you think about school—just think of it as one more way to prove you're getting older.

Amy Griffith

Age 12, California



Everybody can find one thing they like. Maybe

it's a teacher or a class. If you can think of things you like and stop focusing on things you don't like, you'll be more intent on the good than the bad!

Alison Burns

Age 12, Vermont



I used to not like school because of some subjects.

At the end of the weekend, I always thought, *Oh no. Today is Sunday.* But a couple of weeks ago my mom said, "Don't think of the bad things tomorrow, think of the good things, like your friends." That really helped me. I was excited to go to school.

Stephanie Maher

Age 9, Minnesota



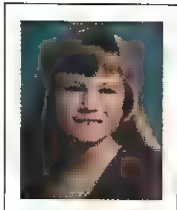
To make the day better, join a club you're

good at, and then on those days you have something to look forward to. That cheers me up.

Laura Esche

Age 11, New Jersey





Don't keep looking at the clock. It only makes

time seem slower. And don't look to see what everyone else is doing. Instead, make things fun. At reading time say, "I'm going to read three chapters in a half hour." Then try to make your goal.

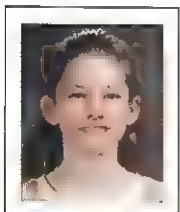
Jenna Krueger
Age 10, Oregon



Talk to your teacher about what you don't

and do like. She can help make school a better place for you.

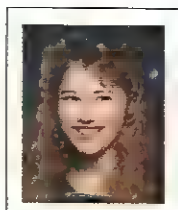
Ali Johnson
Age 9, Washington



I thought school was boring. All I did was work.

Then I thought, *What about all the people who went to the trouble to prepare this?* I'd feel terrible if someone hated what I'd worked hard on. I started thinking more about others.

Sarah Lees
Age 11, Indiana



Sometimes I get really bummed out about school,

so I try to do something that makes me feel good about myself before school—like jogging, riding my horse, or other kinds of exercise. If I feel good before I start school, it helps me through the rest of the day.



Suzanne Schmitt
Age 11, North Dakota



When I hate school, I think of the good things

about it. Without school we would have no doctors, firefighters, or policewomen. You would also cheat yourself out of a lot of good friendships.

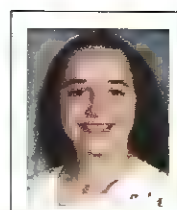
Meghan Stanley
Age 11, Massachusetts



School bugs me. I try to make it go faster by participating.

I raise my hand to answer questions, and when we get into groups I stay on task.

Michelle Lindsay
Age 13, Pennsylvania



Look at all the women who have succeeded in the world. Look up to them as role models. Think of all the things you can do and be after you get an education!

Rachel Hinson
Age 12, Ohio

Speak from Your Heart

Next subject: Procrastination—or putting something off until the last minute. What do you procrastinate about? What problems does it cause? Is it ever a good thing? Tell us when procrastinating got you into trouble. How can you learn to tackle things right away?

Send answers, name, birth date, and school photo to: **AmericanGirl**
8400 Fairway Place, Middleton, WI 53562. While we can print only 10 to 12 letters in each Heart to Heart, we read and learn from each one.

Deadline: October 8, 1997.

Some answers will appear in the March/April 1998 issue. ★



Amelia's Notebook



Marissa Moss is the author of *Amelia's Notebook*, from Tricycle Press. Look for stories about Amelia in every issue of *American Girl!*

5TH-GRADE BLUES

by Marissa Moss

September 7 (except for words and pictures by Amelia!)

Tomorrow is my first day as a fifth grader. (I love that sentence - I'm a **5th GRADER!**)

My friend, Leah, has already planned what she's wearing and what's going to be in her lunch. I'm just planning on being excited - and a little nervous. I wonder what my new teacher will be like.



Leah is so organized, she even knows which barrettes she'll wear (but then, she's the kind of kid who folds her underwear before putting it away)

September 8

Well, now I know what my teacher is like, and I wish I didn't. Leah's not even in my class. She gets the good 5th-grade teacher, Mr. Reyes. I get the witch, Ms. Busby. The first thing she did was read all these rules to us. And she didn't make any jokes. She's not like my old teacher, Mr. Nudel, at all. A whole year with her! 5th grade is ruined!



September 9

I don't even like the classroom! There are boxes of junk blocking the bookshelf. What's more important, books or bits of wood, wire, and nails? And what's all that stuff for, anyway? Is Ms. Busby going to build some kind of torture device? It's torture enough just going to school. We never get to do **ANYTHING** fun.



eyebrows that mean business

mouth pinched tight

loooooong list of rules

ms. Busby

brand-new pencils - sharp, sharp, sharp



fresh, clean, pink erasers (I wish they could stay this way, but I know they'll get all smudgy)



great new binder with lots of pockets and dividers because I'm in 5th grade now, and I'll need those things

I got stuck to mark important pages

no sub topot If you will have the WHO done, you detention you can do to learn, so neighbor a with court no yelling, no name do, yo on t

of all the kids in the class,
I only know Franny and Max

Franny (or is it
Amy? I can
never tell those
twins apart)

September 10

Max
Sasie already raises
her hand every
time!

Frank hasn't said one word yet
(except "Here")

Lucy and Matilda must be best friends
they whisper together constantly!

Ms. Busby says she's sorry to block the bookcase, but she's
collecting things for our first science project. I love science, but what
can we make out of junk? I finally get to 5th grade, and it's like I'm back
in kindergarten, hammering nails into wood and calling it sculpture.

George fell
asleep when
the rules were
read

Carly
seems the
shyest

side view

ooh! what beautiful
art!

nails form a smiley face -
how creative!

top view

September 11

All that junk turned out to be not so junky. We put it all together and
made a telegraph. It was soooo cool! Next week we're making rockets.

(I can't wait to see what kind of stuff Ms. Busby brings for that!)

I LOVE
making inventions

tap this down and then the
brad taps the nail, making a clicking sound

cardboard
taped down

foil

wires

brad

cardboard
nailed down

wood

nail wrapped
with wire

this becomes an
electromagnet - wow!

September 12

Ms. Busby is still strict, but now I like her. She has good ideas
for projects. And she can be funny. She's just serious about
learning. That's O.K. When she does smile, it's great! ★

Ms. Busby doesn't really
tell jokes, but she tells
tons of puns

Have a good weekend,
class. Come back
Monday prepared to
rock and roll - or is
that roll your
rocket?

head full of
good ideas

eyebrows
that are happy

friendly
smiling mouth

Raoul brought
his pet frog
the first day

Hilary might be
friendly - I
like her smile

Maya's voice
is so soft, you
can barely
hear it

his skate-
boards to
school - lucky!

Jacqueline
just moved
here from
Arkansas -
I love her
accent!

Moe keeps
sneaking
snacks -
he smells
like popcorn

Brandon
jiggles his
foot all
the time -
it's driving
me crazy!

Meet Josefina, the
newest American Girl



New Mexico, 1824

Josefina's Gift

BY VALERIE TRIPP
From the book *Meet Josefina*

Illustrated by Jean-Paul Tibbles

It's 1824. Josefina (ho-seh-FEE-nah) lives on a ranch outside Santa Fe, New Mexico, with her papá and three sisters.

Life on the ranch is usually quiet. But not today. Today the caravan has returned!



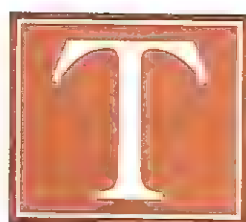
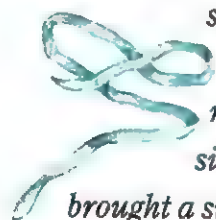
Josefina's grandfather, Abuelito, is a trader. Every year, he organizes a caravan of wagons that travels to Mexico City and back, bringing goods from all over the world. Josefina thinks that the day the caravan returns is the most exciting day of the year. Abuelito always has

stories to tell about his travels,

and surprises, like hair ribbons, for Josefina and her sisters. And this year he has

brought a surprise that is even more wonderful. He has brought their aunt, Tía Dolores.

Josefina has never met Tía Dolores and is amazed to find that her young aunt has brought a piano with her—all the way from Mexico City! The music Tía Dolores plays on the piano is the most beautiful thing Josefina has ever heard. But best of all, Tía Dolores is Mamá's sister.



The sun had set. Cool evening air slid down the mountains, bringing darkness with it. Small bonfires were lit in the front courtyard for light and for warmth.

Everyone at the rancho was getting ready for the big party to celebrate the arrival of the caravan. As Josefina crossed the courtyard, she could hear her oldest sister, Ana, thanking some neighbor women who had come early with dishes of food. No one noticed Josefina slip into the kitchen. She took a small water jar and slipped out again.

In the back courtyard, Josefina knelt in front of a corner where some flowers were growing. Her mamá had planted the flowers. Josefina had cared for them as well as she could since her mamá died, a little more than a year ago.

The sorrow of Mamá's death was always in Josefina's heart, and in the hearts of her sisters Ana, Francisca, and Clara, too. Mamá had brought out the best in the girls. Now that she was gone, they struggled. Francisca and Clara squabbled. Ana worried. Josefina often felt lost and unsure. Mamá had always protected her from things she feared and disliked, such as lightning, snakes, strangers, and the meanest, biggest goat on the rancho, who was called Florecita.

Josefina frowned, thinking of Florecita. Only yesterday, Florecita had frightened Josefina and made her fall backward into the stream and drop the wildflowers she'd collected. As she watched Florecita snatch up the wildflowers and chew them with her evil-looking teeth, Josefina had wished that by some magic the caravan could bring her the courage to stand up to the goat!

Instead, the caravan brought Tía Dolores, Mamá's sister, who had played such lovely music on her piano that Josefina knew she would never forget the way it sounded or the way it made her feel. Josefina had never seen a piano before. The notes sounded as beautiful as bells chiming together in harmony. They were so full, so perfect and delicate, that Josefina had imagined she could almost see them as they filled the air. Josefina wanted to let Tía Dolores know how much she loved the piano music, but she was too shy to tell her with words. So she decided to give Tía Dolores a bouquet of flowers.

One by one, Josefina picked all the freshest and brightest-colored flowers. She put them in the water jar. She was careful to break the flowers off near the ground so that the stems were long, but she didn't disturb the roots. There were not very many flowers, so Josefina had to pick almost all of them in order to have a bouquet anywhere near big enough and beautiful enough to give to Tía Dolores.

Josefina was startled. Her laugh sounded so much like Mamá's!

The corner looked bare when Josefina was through. *It's all right*, she told herself. *Mamá would approve. After all, Tía Dolores was the one who sent Mamá the seeds, so Tía*

Dolores should be the one to enjoy the flowers. They should be a gift for her.

Josefina straightened the flowers in the water jar. The bouquet looked scrawny somehow. So Josefina slipped the blue ribbon out of her hair and tied it around the flowers in a big bow. *There!* she thought with satisfaction. *That looks much better.* She wanted the bouquet to be a surprise for everyone, so she looked around for a place to hide it. She had just entered the narrow passageway between the front and back courtyards when she bumped into Papá.

"What's this you've got here?" asked Papá, peering at Josefina over the tops of the flowers.

"It's . . . they're a gift for Tía Dolores," explained Josefina. "I wanted to give her something to thank her for the music."

It was too dark to see Papá's face clearly, but Josefina could tell by his voice that he was smiling. "I think that is a very fine idea," he said. "I'll tell you what. I am going to make a formal introduction of Tía Dolores to all our friends and neighbors at the party tonight. After I do, perhaps you will give Tía Dolores the bouquet."

"Yes, I will!" said Josefina happily.

"Very well," said Papá. "It will be our secret until then."

"*Gracias*, Papá," said Josefina happily. After Papá left, she put the jar of flowers under the bench in the passageway. No one would see it there, and she would be able



to fetch it quickly when Papá told her it was time to give it to Tía Dolores.



ore guests arrived every moment. They called out a chorus of greetings to one another as they crossed the front court-

yard to the *gran sala*, the family's finest room. Because this was a very special night, the *gran sala* was lit with candles. Their wavering light made the guests' shadows swoop and dance on the walls.

Soon the musicians struck up a lively tune on their fiddles and the real dancing began. It seemed to Josefina that the dancers flew around the room with as much ease as their shadows had. Their feet hardly seemed to touch the floor at all as they whirled by in a blur of bright colors.

No one whirled faster than Francisca. No one looked happier or more beautiful. In the candlelight, her dark curly hair seemed to shine like a black stone in the stream. And Josefina was glad to see that Ana had put her responsibilities aside for a while and was dancing with her husband, Tomás. All around the sides of the *gran sala*, older ladies sat holding babies on their laps so that the babies' young mothers could dance. The old ladies clapped the babies' hands in time to the music.

Josefina and her next oldest sister, Clara, were still too young to be allowed to dance,

so they stood outside in the courtyard and leaned on the windowsill, looking in at the dancers. Josefina's feet danced along to the music. It was impossible to be still! The music seemed to twist and turn in the air, and find its way outside to tickle Josefina's feet so that they just had to move.

The person Josefina and Clara liked best to watch was Tía Dolores. She was easy to pick out of the crowd because she was so tall, and because no one else had hair of quite such a rich, dark red. Josefina stared and stared at Tía Dolores. *This is Mamá's sister*, she kept thinking. Josefina studied Tía Dolores to see if she looked like Mamá. Mamá had been the older of the two sisters, but Tía Dolores was much taller. She didn't have Mamá's soft, rounded beauty, Josefina decided, nor her pale skin or dark, smooth hair. Everything about Tía Dolores was sharper somehow. Her hands were bigger. Her



Tía Dolores

face was more narrow. She had gray eyes, and her dark red hair was springy. Her voice didn't sound like Mamá's, either. Mamá's voice was high and breathy, like notes from a flute. Tía Dolores's voice had a graceful sound. It was as low and clear as notes from a harp string. But when Tía Dolores laughed, Josefina was startled. Her laugh sounded so much like Mamá's! If Josefina closed her eyes, it might be Mamá laughing.

"She dances well, doesn't she?" said Clara as Tía Dolores swept by.



"Yes," said Josefina. "She's as graceful as . . . as the music."

Soon Papá came by the window and nodded to Josefina. Josefina nodded back.

"What's that all about?" asked Clara.

"It's a surprise," said Josefina, excited and smiling. "Stay here and you'll see."



She scurried across the courtyard to the passageway where she'd left the bouquet. It was very dark. Josefina bent down and felt under the bench for the jar with the bouquet in it. It wasn't there. *That's odd*, she thought.

Josefina stood up, perplexed. And then she saw the jar. It was lying on its side near one wall. It was empty. *Where is the bouquet?* Josefina wondered anxiously.

She looked all around the passageway. The bouquet was nowhere to be seen, but an odd white shape looming in the back courtyard caught her eye. Oh, no! The white shape was Florecita! The goat must have broken out of her pen and found her way into the back courtyard. Josefina did *not* want to put Florecita back in her pen. She had been poked by Florecita's sharp horns before, and she had no wish to be poked again.

When Josefina turned away to get help, she stepped on something. She stooped down and picked it up. At first she didn't know what it was. And then she saw. It was a few green stems held together by a trampled, mud-

stained blue ribbon. Suddenly, Josefina realized what had happened. *Florecita had eaten the bouquet!* This was all that was left of the flowers she had picked for Tía Dolores.

But that was not the worst of it. At that instant, Josefina saw what Florecita was doing. Calm as could be, Florecita was standing smack in the middle of what used to be Mamá's flowers. She was chewing a mouthful of stems. One hollyhock, root and all, dangled from her mouth. Josefina could see that no other flowers were left. All that remained were some scraggly, chewed, crushed, and broken stems and a scattering of leaves and petals on the ground.

Florecita turned her nasty yellow eyes on Josefina. The goat looked pleased with herself.

Josefina was furious. "Florecita!" she hissed in a ferocious whisper. "You awful, awful animal! You've ruined *everything*."

Josefina was so angry she forgot to be afraid of Florecita. She marched right up to the goat and yanked the hollyhock out of her mouth. Florecita looked surprised. She looked even more surprised when Josefina swatted her on the back with the stems, saying, "How could you? Oh, I *hate* you, Florecita!"

Josefina shoved Florecita hard. Then she took hold of one of Florecita's fearsome horns and pulled with all her strength. "Come with me," she said. Josefina dragged Florecita to her pen. She slammed the gate shut. "I hate you, Florecita," she said again. "I'll hate you forever!"





Josefina ran all the way back to the bench and slumped down on it. There was nothing to be done. She looked at the dirty blue ribbon and the chewed stems wilting in her hand and fought back tears of disappointment.

"Josefina?" a voice said. "What are you doing here in the darkness?"

Josefina looked up. She saw Tía Dolores coming toward her. Josefina could hardly talk. She showed the sad-looking stems to Tía Dolores. "This was a bouquet for you," she said in a shaky voice. "But our goat Florecita found it and ate it. And she killed Mamá's flowers, too."

"Ah," said Tía Dolores. She sat next to Josefina on the bench.

Slowly, Josefina explained. "I wanted to give you a gift to thank you for the piano music," she said. "So I picked all the best flowers. I

tied my new hair ribbon around them. The flowers were so pretty. They grew from seeds you sent Mamá. I've been watering them since Mamá died, because I know she loved them. Now there are none left. There will never be any more. The flowers are dead."

Tía Dolores was a good listener. She sat still and gave Josefina her full attention. Neither one of them noticed the noise and laughter coming from the gran sala. The party seemed far away. When Josefina was finished, Tía Dolores said, "Show me your mamá's flowers."

Josefina led Tía Dolores to the corner of the back courtyard. "You see," she said. "There is nothing left."

Tía Dolores knelt down. She looked at what was left of the flowers. She scooped up a handful of soil and rubbed it between her fingers. Gently, she touched the short, bitten-off stems.

Then she smiled. "Don't worry," she said. "Your mamá planted these flowers well. The roots are deep and strong. You've kept them healthy by watering the soil. They'll live, I promise." She stood and brushed the soil off her hands. "Do you like caring for flowers?" she asked.

**She looked at the
chewed stems and
fought back tears.**

Josefina nodded. "I used to help Mamá," she said.

"I brought some seeds with me when I left Mexico City," said Tía Dolores. "Perhaps you and I can plant them tomorrow."

"Oh, could we?" said Josefina.

"Yes," said Tía Dolores. "We'll wash your hair ribbon, too. Now we had better go back to the gran sala."

Papá met them at the door. "Josefina," he said. "Where have you been? I introduced Tía Dolores, but then I couldn't find you."

"Oh, Papá," said Josefina. "Florecita ate the bouquet! And then she almost ruined all the rest of Mamá's flowers."

"Ah, that's too bad," said Papá sadly. He looked around. "Is Florecita loose?"

"No," said Josefina. "I dragged her back to her pen and shut the gate."

"You did?" asked Papá. "But I thought you were afraid of Florecita."

"I am," said Josefina. "I mean, I *was*. I guess just now I was so angry at Florecita I forgot!"

Papá laughed. "Well, we never know where our courage is going to come from!" he said. "I am sorry about the flowers, though."

"Tía Dolores says the flowers will be all right," said Josefina. "She's going to help me plant new seeds tomorrow."

"Is she?" said Papá. He turned and smiled at Tía Dolores. "Well, then, Dolores," he said, "that means you'll have to come back often. You'll have to visit us to see how the flowers are coming along."

"I will," said Tía Dolores. "God willing."

"Come inside and have something to eat now," said Papá. "Ana would never forgive us if we didn't enjoy the food she's prepared."

Josefina followed Papá and Tía Dolores into the gran sala. She grinned to herself. *I guess the caravan didn't need to bring me the courage to stand up to Florecita after all, she thought. It turns out I already had it. But I might never have found out if I had not picked a bouquet as a gift for Tía Dolores.* ★

Meet the Author

Valerie Tripp



Imagining Josefina's life has taken me to a different time and place and culture. It's been like meeting a wonderful new friend who has lots to teach me about her family, her home, and the sights and sounds and customs of New Mexico.

Valerie Tripp has written 18 books in The American Girls Collection, including three about Josefina.

Josefina's Home



Josefina Montoya and her family lived in New Mexico in 1824, many years before the land became part of the United States. Their home was miles from any large town, so they worked

hard to get what they needed from the land around them. Take a peek into this cutaway drawing and see the chores you might find Josefina and her family doing throughout the year. ★

Life Inside Four Walls

Josefina's home is made of mud bricks and plaster. Thick walls and small windows keep out summer's scorching heat and winter's icy chill. Every spring, the girls and women of the household put a new coat of mud plaster on the walls to keep them strong.

Welcome!

The big, heavy gate opens wide so the family's animals can be herded inside quickly if danger threatens. Even Josefina's enemy, Florecita the goat, would be given protection within the courtyard's walls. (See if you can find Florecita on these pages.) Most times, Papá and the others use the small door to enter.

Sleeping Sala

Josefina and her sisters share a room for sleeping. Their beds are soft sheepskins covered with

wool blankets. Clara is rolling up her bed so that the room can be used for other activities during the day.



Courtyards

In the front courtyard, Josefina uses grinding stones to turn corn into flour for tortillas. Several times a week, bread is baked in the outdoor ovens, called *hornos* (OR-nohs).



Tía Dolores strings chiles that have been grown on the *rancho*. When dried, they can be used for cooking long after the fresh harvest is gone. In the back courtyard, Mamá's flower garden blooms brightly.

Weaving Room

Ana spins wool into yarn using a *malacate*, or hand-held spindle. She and her sisters dye the yarn with plants they gather from around the *rancho*. The girls and servants weave beautiful blankets on looms and trade the blankets for other goods the family needs. Ana's baby sleeps peacefully in a hanging cradle.



Cocina

In the kitchen, or *cocina* (ko-SEE-nah), the family's cook lays pieces of pumpkin on the warm shelf above the hearth to dry. The shelf is called a shepherd's bed because shepherds sometimes bring their sick lambs inside to sleep on the bunk.

Family Sala

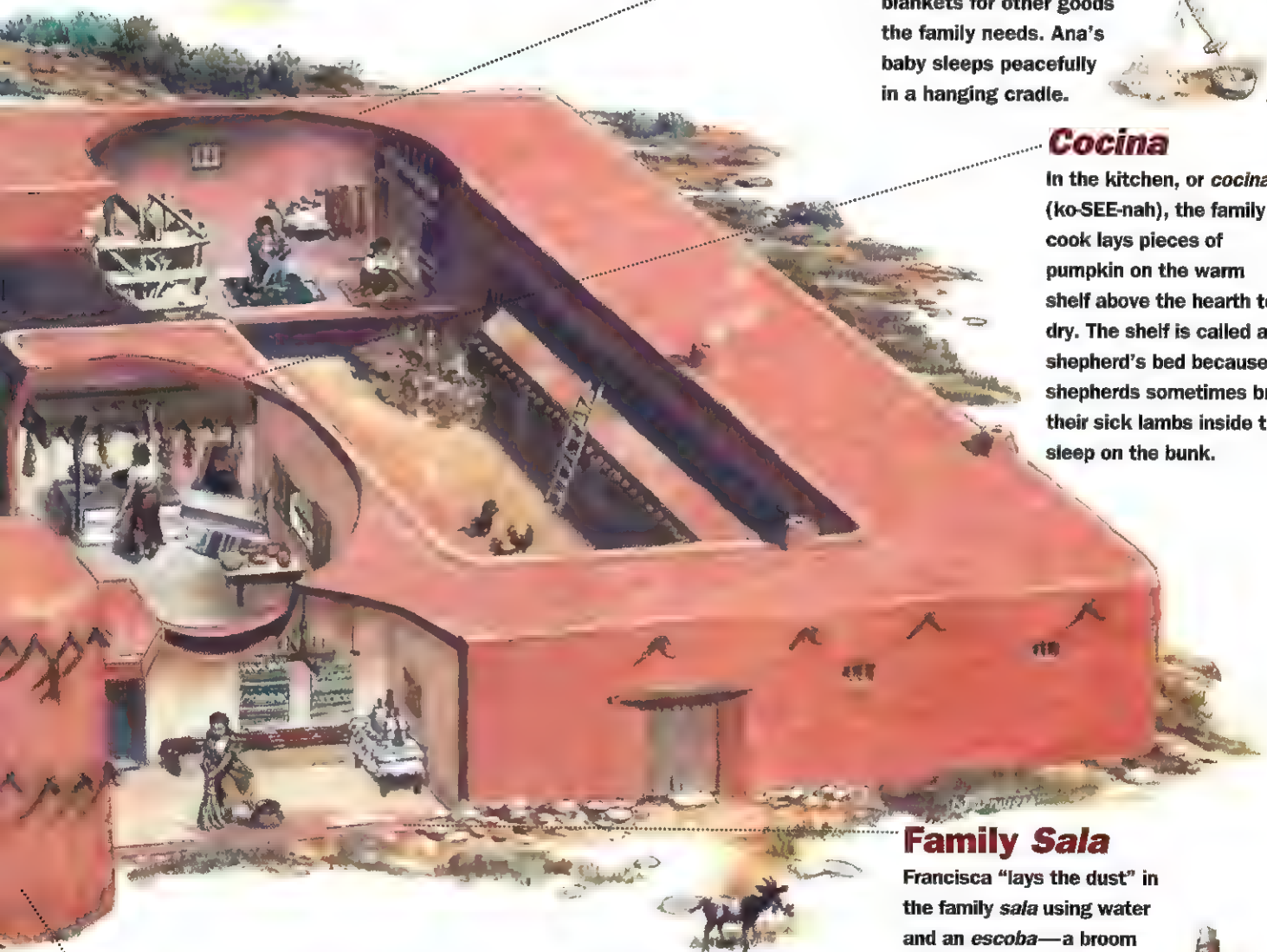
Francisca "lays the dust" in the family *sala* using water and an *escoba*—a broom made of grass. The village church bell rings at dawn, calling the family to this room to pray. The altar is decorated with candles and small statues of saints.



Torreón

From the skinny windows in the lookout tower, or *torreón*, Josefina's family can spot approaching

visitors or raiders from an unfriendly Indian tribe. The sisters could see Abuelito's caravan when it was still miles away!



Gear

A new school year has just begun. Here's a way to have more fun: Shake up how you think today—do everything in a brand new way!

Wake Up!

Does getting up in the morning get you down? These tips are guaranteed to get you going!

Circle of Friends

"My friends and I have a wake-up circle. Each week one girl sets her alarm clock for 6 A.M. When it goes off she calls the other girls and tells them a brainteaser. If they can figure out the brainteaser and get to school on time, the caller gives them an inexpensive gift."

Meg :-)

Age 13, New York

Shower Scents

"Sing in the shower or use scented shampoos and soaps. Listen and sing to the radio when you are getting dressed."

Brittany :-)

Age 13, Pennsylvania

Ready?... O.K.!

More than 800 girls entered our Real-Life Cheer contest! The top chants appear on these pages. Try one out when you or your friends need a boost!

Pet Alarm

"My turtle and I sleep together. Every morning at exactly 5:43 A.M., he wakes me by biting my toes. Believe it or not, it really gets me moving and feels really soothing."

Phoebe :-)

Age 11, Colorado





Up!

Jump to It!

"My mom and I get up to exercise. Since I'm home-schooled, we can start school anytime."

Leah :-)
Age 12, Illinois

High-Tech Help

"I have a computer that I programmed an alarm into. I put different sounds and pictures that move on it to help me wake up."

Carla :-)
Age 11, Ohio



Dawn Dance

"I'm usually woken up by my timed radio, and sometimes when a song like 'Macarena' comes on, I dance to it. It really wakes me up!"

Alessa :-)
Age 13, Germany

One, two, three, four,
Get your feeties on the floor!
Five, six, seven, eight,
Or you will be very late!

Holly Miller
Age 9, Iowa

Sunrise Surprise

"I used to wake up to an alarm clock, but I always went back to sleep. So I brainstormed and came up with an idea. Every morning my dad gets up at 5:30 A.M. The night before, I tie a string from the corner of my covers to his bedroom doorknob. Now when his alarm clock goes off, my covers come off, too!"

Erin :-)
Age 11, Nevada

Dress Up!

Jump into new hairstyles and fun accessories you make yourself!



Pop-Top Art

"Paint soda can tabs with different-colored nail polish, then slip them onto your shoelaces or tie them on a string to make necklaces. You can use different colors for different holidays, like orange and black for Halloween or red and green for Christmas. I collect them and it's a lot of fun!"

Nicole Marsh
Age 12, California



Braid-y Bunch

1 Make a ponytail and secure it with an elastic band.

2 Take a thin section of your ponytail and braid it. Fasten the end with a small barrette or elastic band.

3 Make a bunch of braids from your entire tail!

Here's a Tip!

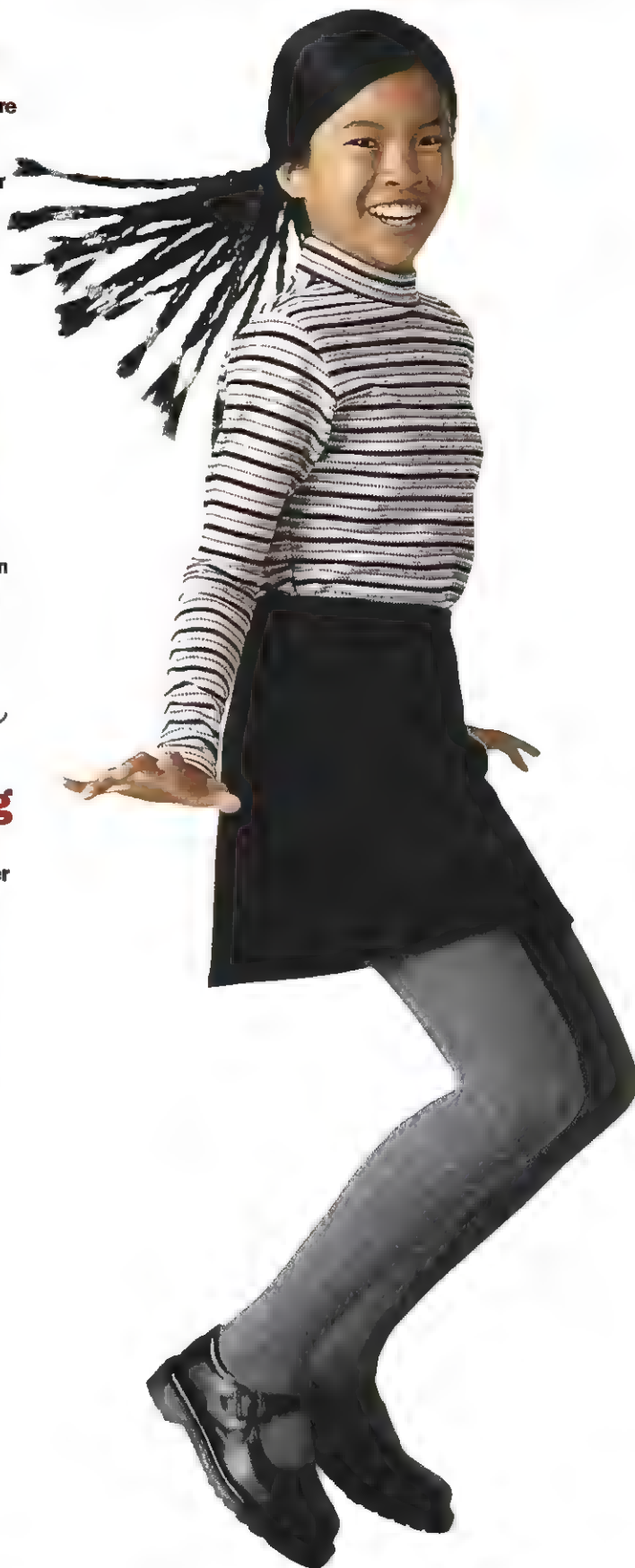
"Use tinfoil to tie off the tips of your braids! Cut several 1-by-2-inch rectangles from aluminum foil and fold them in half lengthwise. Wrap the foil around the ends of your braids, and pinch into place!"

Jesse Einstein
Age 10, Michigan

Recycled Ring

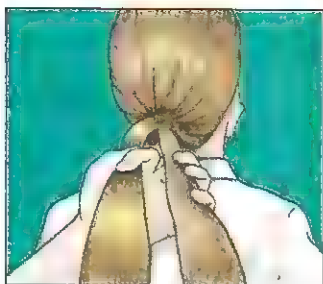
"Make a ring for every finger with twist ties! Peel the paper or plastic off a twist tie, then string beads onto the bare wire. When the beaded wire reaches around your finger, twist the ends together. Cut off extra wire with scissors."

Kate :-)
Age 11, Texas

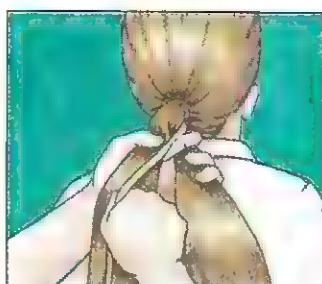


Fancy Fish Tail

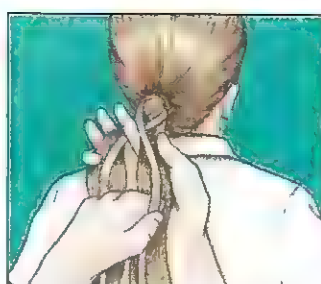
Illustrations: Gan Stringz Bourget



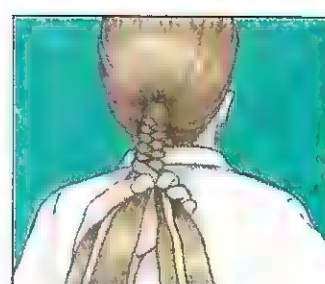
1 Try this fish bone braid from the book *Braids & Bows*. Make a ponytail and divide it into two sections.



2 Separate a thin piece of hair from the outside of the right section of your ponytail and cross it over to join the left section.



3 Pull a thin piece of hair from the outside of the left section of your ponytail and cross it over to join the right section.



4 Repeat steps 2 and 3 until your braid is the length you want. Secure the end with an elastic band.

Brush your teeth, comb your hair,
We're gonna be late if we don't get there.
Put your socks on, tie your shoes.

Last one to the car will lose!

Jenna Duckett
Age 12, Alabama

Button Backs

Perk up a plain shirt by adding brightly colored button backs. Cut flowers, stars, or other simple shapes from a stiff fabric like felt. The shapes should be a little larger than

your buttons. Make button-holes by folding the shapes in half and snipping a small slit into the center of each. After buttoning your shirt, slip the backs over your buttons.

Best-Dressed Lunch Bags

Decorate an insulated lunch bag with removable charms you attach with safety pins.

If you're a brown bagger, have a lunch bag recycling contest with your friends. See who can reuse her bag the most times in a month. Each day, one person marks everyone's bag with a special stamp, sticker, or doodle. Whoever has the most marks at the end of the month wins!



Brain Food

Treat yourself to a bite-size cliff-hanger a day with *Lunch Box Library*, from Workman Publishing. Adventures and mysteries are printed on sheets you tear off to pack in your lunch. These suspense stories are \$6.95 at stores.

Pack Up!

Make everything you take to school as unique as you are!

Creative Carryalls



Zipper pulls add color and charm to your backpack. Hook inexpensive rings you no longer wear onto a key ring. Link the key ring to a zipper—it's jewelry for your backpack! Or string beads, bells, or charms onto shoelaces or ribbons. Tie the streamers to a zipper to tag the bag as yours!

You can take your favorite fuzzy friends to school with you. Attach them to your backpack with one or more large safety pins.



Binder Beauty

Keep your binders looking fresh all year round! Start with binders that have a clear front pocket. Then slip a square of gift wrap into the pocket. You can change the paper to match the seasons!

Big test! Big test! That's my cry!
In one week, oh me, oh my!
Study, study, that's my plan.

I'll try the very best I can!

Christie Norns
Age 12, Louisiana





Study Up!

Try these five fun ways to study—you won't believe you're learning!

Required Reading

Are you studying classic stories such as *Black Beauty* or *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* in school? Eyewitness Classics make these tales come alive even more with fascinating pictures that fill in facts about each story's time period. You'll find these books in stores for \$14.95.

Melodies for Memory

"Replace the words in a favorite song with facts from your homework. For example, change 'Heart and soul, I fell in love with you, heart and soul . . .' into 'Bo-ta-ny, it means the study of plants and trees . . .' The facts will stick in your head more easily!"

Evin Tucker
Age 12, California

Amusing Math

Master math with the 24 Game, by Suntex. Add, subtract, multiply, or divide the numbers on each card to make them equal 24. You can play against friends or practice on your own. Versions of 24 Game range from \$5.95 to \$19.95 at educational toy stores.

Elucidate. E-L-U-C . . .



Spelling Smarts

Instead of having someone drill you on your spelling words, host a spelling bee for your stuffed animals. Have a friend read words from your spelling list, then help your animals take turns spelling the words. See which animal is the best speller!

Help for Homework

Mollie's Homework Helper
<http://www.parkbank.com/Dogpage.htm>

Let Mollie the dog guide you through tough homework assignments! She'll help you find info on the Internet to elucidate all your subjects. She's a student's best friend!

Tell Us Your Tips!

Do you have a fun way to learn a tough subject? Send us your study secrets! You'll find our addresses—both regular mail and e-mail—on page 6. ★

A small illustration of a girl with red hair, wearing a green shirt and red skirt, sitting on the ground and sewing with a needle and thread. A red thread spool is nearby.

Why Didn't I

by Cathryn Harding

All across America, girls are solving problems with their wonderful, wacky, winning inventions!

Doggy Dilemma

Emily Strubinger, 12, had a hairy problem: her dog, Harley, was always tracking mud into the house. When Emily tried to clean Harley's paws, the dog tugged at her towel and the mess just got worse. That's when the Missouri inventor got the idea for Pet Pal, a reusable, washable, pooch-cleaning glove.

The first glove Emily sewed wouldn't stretch to fit on her hand, so she decided to sew a loose mitten instead. Then to make the wrist snug—so that Harley wouldn't be able to pull the mitten off—Emily used Velcro strips like the ones on the sleeves of her mom's coat. "When I first used the Pet Pal on Harley, she just sat there," Emily says. "It was amazing!"



Think of That?



A Bright Idea

Julie Thompson's problem was a thing that went bump in the night. That thing was her! Whenever she got out of bed in the dark, Julie, 11, walked into walls and doors because she couldn't see well. But the Ohio inventor figured out how

to light her way: bedroom slippers with mini flashlights attached to the sides!

Now Julie uses her Footlights to steer clear around dark corners at night. "I don't walk into things anymore," she says. "I have to remember to turn on the flashlights, but that's hard to forget!"



A Fuzzy Fix

Four years ago, K-K Gregory, then ten, was building a snow fort in her Massachusetts yard when she experienced a common wintertime woe: snow was sliding into her mittens and up her coat sleeves. K-K headed inside to warm up. There she spotted some fuzzy Polartec fabric, and soon she had solved her chilly dilemma. K-K created "Wristies" by sewing a tube

from the fabric and cutting a slit for her thumb. Now her wrist warmers are selling in stores across the country!





Higher Thinking

When Jayce Coziar, 12, and Jamie Ellsworth, 11, were looking for a project for their school's invention fair, they decided to ask friends and

family members about problems they dealt with every day. Jamie's mother said she was tired of needing different shoes for different occasions. The Nevada girls stepped up

to that challenge and invented a shoe with an adjustable heel. The heel has three parts, which can be added or taken off to make the shoe go from dressy to casual.

Jayce and Jamie were surprised when their invention took first place for their grade. "We didn't expect it to work as well as it did," Jayce says. But clearly, their shoe was a step above the rest!

Photograph: Bill Husa



A Touching Invention



Inventors don't always have to start from scratch—lots of great inventions are made by altering something that already exists. Piper Grant, 12, did that last year for her school's invention fair in Nevada. Her younger brother is almost blind. Piper wanted to design a game that he could play on his own.

Using a braille dictionary

and puff paint, Piper made some changes to the game Candy Land. She added raised braille letters to each of the colored squares and cards. Her brother could read the symbols with his fingers.

Piper's bumpy board game won the grand prize at her invention fair! But for Piper, her brother's happiness is

the best reward. "My brother doesn't have as many opportunities as I do," Piper says. "Before, he couldn't play a game without having to ask for help. With this game he has something he can do himself!"



Photography: Mike Walker

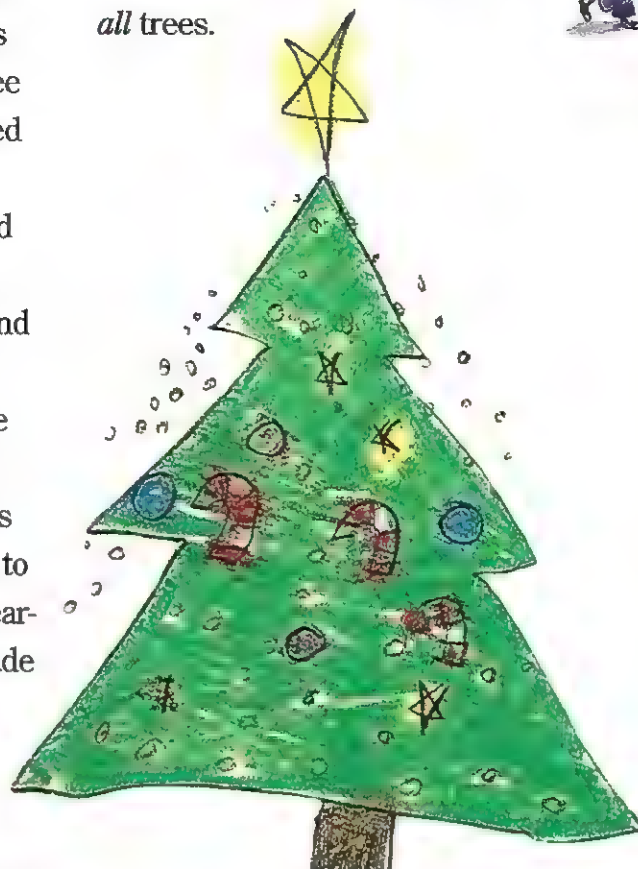
Safe Solution



When Ray-Keshia Toomer of Texas heard about three

children who died in a fire caused by their Christmas tree, she wished she could keep that from happening again. So she and classmates Anny Lee and Jennifer King designed the Safe Star. It's a tree topper that detects heat and sends out a shower of chemicals to put out a fire. The eight-year-olds drew pictures and made a video of their idea for a national contest, and won

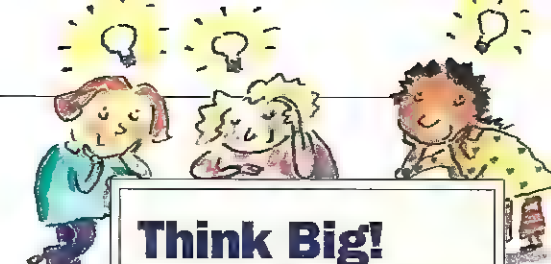
second place! They hope a star like this will one day top *all* trees.



Household Help

Chelsea Lanmon has had lots of hot ideas! In first grade, she designed her Sleeve Smoother. It would iron puffy dress

sleeves without pressing them flat. The next year the Texas inventor drew plans for a battery-operated, heated ice cream scoop. Chelsea made models of her inventions. They don't actually work, but they do show others the ideas she has. Chelsea, now 12, hopes her inventions will someday become reality: "Technology can do almost anything. If you have an idea and a clue of what it can do, *you* can do almost anything!"



Think Big!

You don't need special training to be an inventor. These tips can help you get started.

1 Find a Problem

Notice what bothers you during the day or what you wish would be simpler to do. Emily Strubinger saw Harley's mud tracks as an invitation to invent.

2 Consider Many Solutions

Your first idea may not be your best. Emily thought about making a doggy bath mat that would spray water up at Harley. But she realized it would look as bad as the mud tracks, and cost too much to build anyway.

3 Experiment

You may need to change the size, shape, or materials of your invention to make it work. Emily first tried making her mitten out of a special leather cleaning cloth, but it was too stiff to sew. Her sister then suggested trying the very thin, superabsorbent towel that swim teams use. It was much easier to work with.

4 Share Your Idea

Emily showed Pet Pal to friends, neighbors, and people at a veterinary clinic. Nearly everyone told her they would buy it if they saw it in stores.


5 Don't Give Up

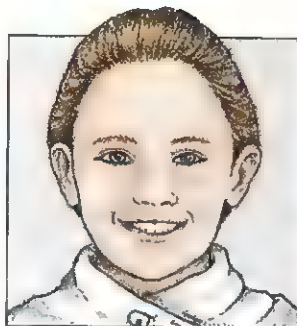
"Don't be discouraged if your idea doesn't work at first," Emily advises. If you already knew how to fix a problem, you wouldn't need an invention! ★

Paint Your Face

This Halloween, disguise yourself with some greasepaint and a few accessories. Even your friends won't recognize you!

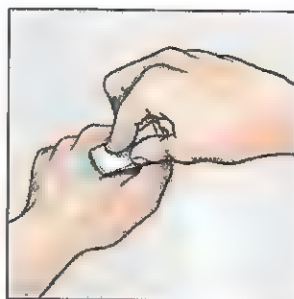
YOU WILL NEED

-  An adult to help you
- Wedge-shaped cosmetics sponges (available at drugstores)
- 1/4-inch flat paintbrush with stiff bristles (available at art and craft stores)
- Greasepaint (available at costume stores)
- Cotton sock
- Baby powder
- Baby wipes
- Cold cream
- **Miss Monster**
- Yellow, green greasepaint
- Red lip liner pencil
- Black eyeliner (liquid liner works well)
- **Tigrrrl**
- White, yellow, orange, black greasepaint
- Black eyeliner (liquid liner works well)
- **Blue Sky**
- Yellow, white, orange, blue greasepaint



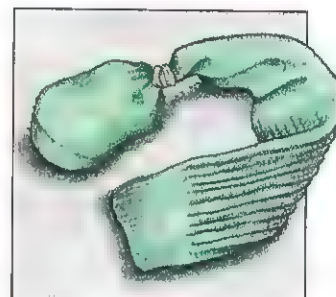
The Basics

Some people are allergic to greasepaint. Test it on the inside of your wrist the day before you paint your face. Ask an adult to do the face painting for you. Start with a clean face. Put on the costume top, pull back your hair, and wrap an old towel around your shoulders.



Painting

Don't wet your brush or sponges. Use a separate sponge for each color of paint. Don't put too much paint on the sponge! You can always add more paint to your face if needed. After dipping the sponge into the paint, dab a little on the back of your hand to work the paint into the sponge. Use baby wipes or cold cream to take greasepaint off your face. Baby wipes will work well for cleaning your brush, too.

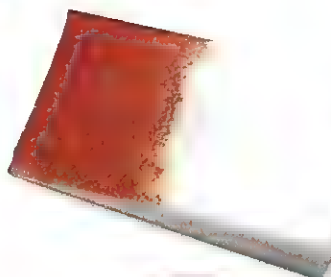


Powder Sock

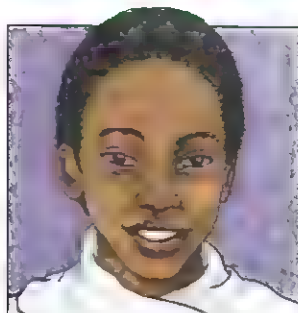
To keep greasepaint from smearing, powder your face often. An easy way to do this is to fill an old, clean cotton sock with about 1/2 cup baby powder. Secure with a rubber band. Close your eyes, hold your breath, and gently pat the powder sock over the painted area until it feels dry. Lightly brush off excess powder with a tissue.

Paint Tips

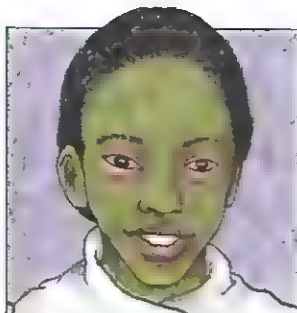
These directions are for greasepaint. If you want to use water-based face paint instead, you will need to dampen your sponges and brush, and don't powder the paint. Also, let face dry between each step.



Miss Monster



1 Sponge a light layer of yellow paint over face, ears, and neck. Leave an unpainted circle around each eye.



2 Sponge a light layer of green paint over yellow. Powder with powder sock.



3 Use brush to fill in green circle around each eye. If color is too light, add another coat. Outline lips in green, and fill in. Powder with powder sock.



4 Draw red gashes on forehead and cheeks with lip liner pencil. Use eye-liner to draw stitches and dark eyebrows. Powder with powder sock.



Costume

Paint your hands, too! Wear a wig, or spray your hair into a mess. Add a stripe with colored hair-spray. To make bolts, paint two spools silver and let dry. Glue spools to ribbon, and tie around your neck. Glue ribbons onto green tights to make stitches.

Tigrrrr!



1 Sponge white paint around eyes, nose, and mouth. Sponge yellow paint to fill in around white areas. Blend edges.



2 Sponge orange paint around edges of face. Blend orange into yellow. Powder with powder sock.



3 Use eyeliner to draw a triangle across nose, and fill in. Draw a line down from nose to top lip. Draw curved tiger lips at edges of mouth. Add whisker dots. Outline lips and chin.



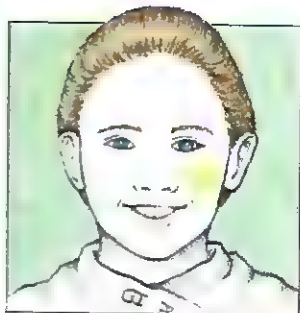
4 Gently brush black paint stripes in from edges of face. Tip: they should be wide at the outside and get narrower. Powder with powder sock.



Costume

Paint your hands, too!
Make ears from fake fur, and attach to headband with pipe cleaners. To make tail, tightly roll a piece of fake fur around a wire. Tuck a tuft of black yarn into one end. Glue edge of fur and let dry. Tie a string tightly around top of tail, and tie around your waist under shirt.

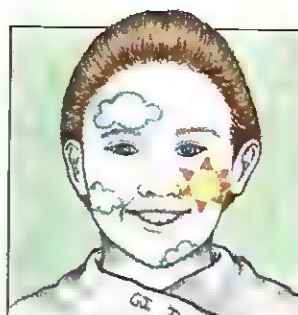
Blue Sky



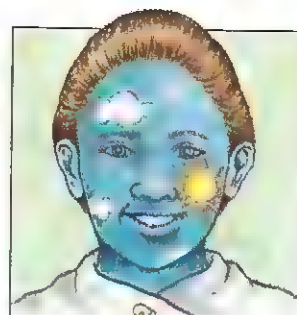
1 Use brush to paint a yellow circle on one cheek. Fill in circle with yellow. Sponge a white paint base over rest of face, ears, and neck. Powder with powder sock.



2 Use brush to paint orange triangles around edge of circle. Powder with powder sock.



3 Use brush to outline clouds in blue paint.



4 Use brush, sponge, and blue paint to fill in areas around clouds and sun. Use brush to paint another coat of white inside clouds. Powder with powder sock.



Costume

Tie hair back with a wide rainbow ribbon. Cut clouds from white felt and glue to a blue sweatshirt. ★

ha ha halloween!



Have a party that will tickle your funny bone *and* send chills up your spine!

Laugh Your Head Off

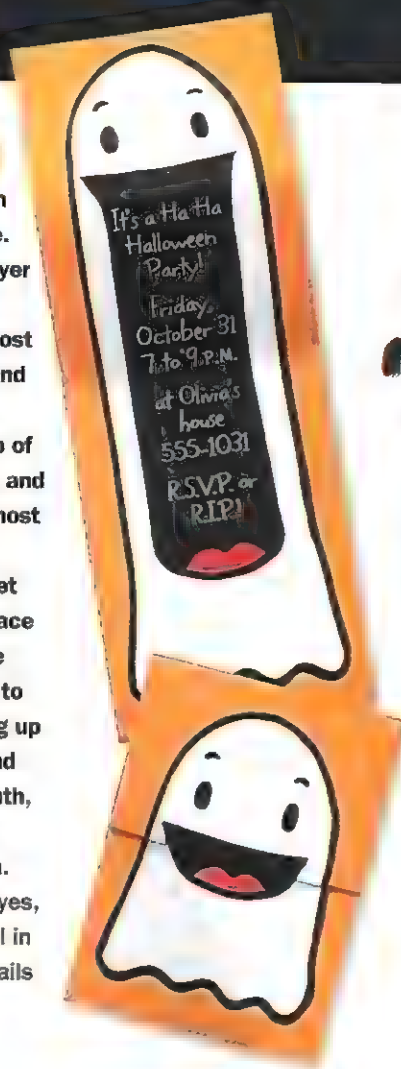
Get your party off to a hilarious start by playing this game. Pick one girl to hold a flashlight so it shines straight out in front of her. She must keep her eyes tightly shut during the whole game. Ask the other guests to stand in a circle around her, holding hands. Turn off the lights, and start walking around the flashlight girl. Be very quiet! When she says, "Stop! Laugh your head off!" stop circling. Whoever is caught in the beam of the flashlight must do her best silly,

wacky, or scary laugh. The flashlight girl guesses whose laugh it was, still keeping her eyes shut. If she's right, the laugher has to hold the flashlight in the next game!



Invitation

Cut a 4-inch-by-11-inch orange paper rectangle. Fold in half. Fold top layer back in half again. On white paper, draw a ghost about 10 inches long and 3 inches wide, and cut out. Place ghost on top of unfolded orange paper, and refold. Trim edges of ghost so they line up when folded. **Tip:** once you get a good ghost shape, trace around it to make more invitations. Glue ghost to orange paper, matching up folds. Fold invitation and use pencil to draw mouth, then unfold and finish drawing sides of mouth. Use markers to draw eyes, tongue, and outline. Fill in mouth. Write party details with white pencil.



Spooky Spiders

Make these at the party for some frightful fun. For each spider you will need black yarn, 4 black pipe cleaners, 2 small black pom-poms, 2 "wiggle" eyes, and craft glue. To make a big pom-pom, hold yarn end with left thumb pressed against left palm. Loosely wrap yarn around other four fingers of left hand. After 30 wraps, gently slip loops off fingers.

Gather loops and tie a long piece of yarn around center in a tight double knot. Snip loops open with scissors, and fluff. To make legs, line up pipe cleaners and twist together at center. Make a bend in each pipe cleaner. Tie big pom-pom to legs with long ends of yarn. Trim ends. Attach little pom-poms and eyes with glue. Let dry.



Decorations

Give each guest a candy cup full of giggling ghosts! Paint clay pots black, and let dry. Glue orange rickrack around top edges, and write guests' names with white paint. For ghosts, you will need

peanut-shaped sandwich cookies, white frosting, and black gel icing. To make a ghost, frost one side of a cookie. Add eyes and mouth with gel icing. Fill pots with candy corn and ghosts.

Favors

Your guests will howl over these funny favors! Wax lips, fake fangs, and fizzy candy are all goofy goodies. To make cat bag, cut top of a black party bag to look like ears. Cut

eyes in bag with small scissors. Poke four holes in bag, and stick white pipe cleaners through to make whiskers. Fill bags with orange crinkle paper and add favors.





Daffy Apples

Make funny faces on these caramel cuties.

You will need:

Chocolate bar
Caramel apples
Orange icing
M&M's Mini Baking Bits
Green fruit leather

Cut or break chocolate bar into triangles. Attach 3 triangles to each apple with orange icing. Press M&Ms into caramel to make big smiles. Cut fruit leather into triangles, and press to tops of apples. To make bows, cut fruit leather into strips about 3 inches long. Fold ends in, and press to sticks.

Wacky Witch

Decorate your plate! Tuck a folded black napkin under a green plate to make a hat. Add two Creepy Peepers and an orange candy nose. Cut red fruit leather to make lips, and add two gum teeth. Finish with red licorice lace hair!

Creepy Peepers

Jeepers, creepers! They'll want to know where you got these eyes.

You will need:

White frosting
Vanilla wafers
Lifesavers Gummi Savers
M&M's Mini Baking Bits
Red gel icing

Frost tops of vanilla wafers. Place a green Lifesaver candy on each wafer, slightly off center. Place a dark brown M&M in the center of each Lifesaver. Draw bloodshot lines around edges with red gel icing.



High Spirits

Hang these ghosts from the ceiling. For each ghost, you will need a white balloon, thin wire, a 48-inch square of lightweight batting, two 48-inch squares of lightweight tulle, black felt, and tape. Blow up balloon and knot end. Wrap end of wire around knot. Drape batting

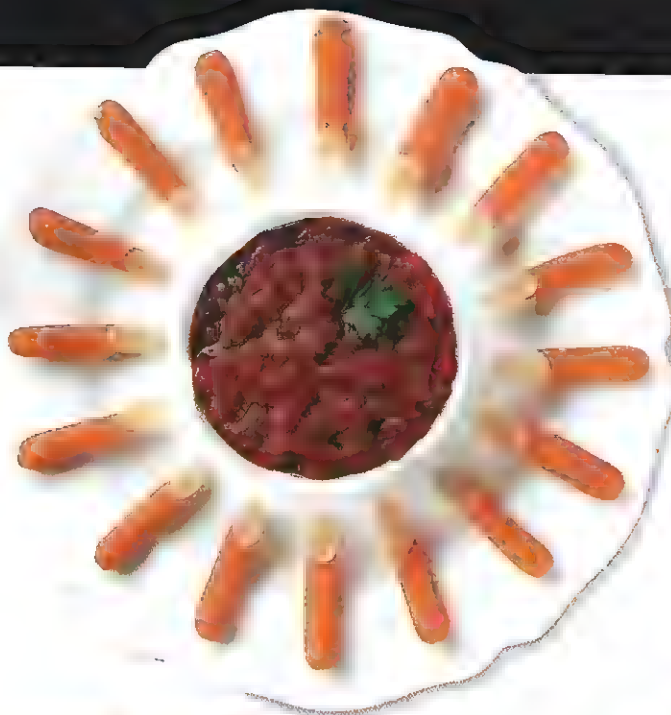
over knotted end of balloon, and stick wire through center. Drape both tulle squares over batting, and stick wire through center. Trim fabric edges. Cut felt eyes, and attach under tulle with tape. Hang ghost from wire. For an extra spooky effect, shine a light on ghosts from below!



Brew-Ha-Ha

Serve this tangy witch's brew to all your ghoulish friends. In a pitcher, combine 1 can pineapple-orange juice concentrate (pourable or frozen) and 3 cans lemon-lime soda. Stir gently and serve. Add black licorice twists for decoration.





Finger Food

Feel like a little snack? Then go ahead and bite your nails! You will need baby carrots, cream cheese, sliced almonds, and salsa. Spread a dab

of cream cheese on the end of each carrot. Gently press an almond slice to cream cheese. Arrange "fingers" around bowl of salsa, and dig in!



'Fraidy Cat

Do you know how to meow? Play this game if you're feeling feline. Pick one girl to be the cat, and ask the other guests to sit in a circle. The object of this game is *not* to laugh at the cat. The cat goes up to one of the girls and does

her best cat imitation. The cat can't talk, but she can make kitty noises and act really silly. The girl pats the cat on the head and says, "Don't be frightened, kitty!" If no one laughs, the cat goes on to another girl. Whoever laughs first has to be the next cat.



Funny Bones

Play this game to make a crazy configuration! Before the party, write the names of different bony body parts (elbow, knee, foot, etc.) on scraps of paper and put them in a bowl. Ask your guests to stand in line. The first girl takes two slips of paper and has to connect herself to the next girl in line at those places. For example, if she picks *hip* and *ankle*, she could stick her ankle to

the next girl's hip, or she could stick her hip to the next girl's ankle. She puts the slips back in and passes the bowl to the next person in line. That girl picks two slips and connects herself to the next girl, without breaking her connection to the first girl. Keep playing until everyone is connected. See how long you can stick together! ★

Friendship File

A section
celebrating
you and
your friends!

Making Friends

AG readers tell how they met their closest pals. Plus, tips on breaking the ice, and a quiz on what makes a good friend!



Sarah and Jamie

"This is how I met my friend Sarah Meyerpeter. Sarah's friend Trista was chasing me around the corner of a school. Sarah was heading the other way around. We bonked heads! The next time we saw each other, we both had

black eyes and bumpy foreheads! We've been friends ever since."

Jamie Matthews
Age 10, California

Sarah Meyerpeter
Age 12, California

PHOTO ALBUM

Kara Campora and Kati Pinder met when Kara's mom babysat the girls. They were less than a year old! They're still friends, even though Kati has since moved away. This photo was taken near Kati's home in Vermont, at a Ben & Jerry's ice cream factory. What a sweet story!

Kati Pinder
Age 9, Vermont

Kara Campora
Age 10, Massachusetts



FRIENDS ARE EVERYWHERE

To find a friend, just look around—and speak up!

"I met Alex Steevensz because she sat next to me on the first day of third grade. Our teacher talked so much about home-work and getting ready for junior high, we both said he was way too serious!"

Gwen Purdom
Age 10, Illinois

"Monica Dehnert was on my diving team. We were waiting in line and started talking about diving. After a while we could talk about anything."

Kristen Stomad
Age 11, Wisconsin

"I met Cara Corn eight years ago, but then she moved. A few months ago her mom brought her over. It was hard to talk at first, but then we talked about things we were involved in, like sports. I found out we both run track and swim! And playing games brought up new conversation."

Andrea Gadtter
Age 12, Indiana

TALK IT UP

A friendly conversation is the first step toward a friendship. If you find someone you'd like to know better, make the first move! Try one of these conversation starters.



1. Talk about a book, TV show, or movie.

Wasn't that a sad story we read in English?

You play the violin really well.



Do you want to play soccer on Saturday?

4. Invite her to do something with you, like eat lunch, study, or come over after school.

You have a lot of Beanie Babies! Which one is your favorite?



2. Ask her about a hobby.



3. Give her a compliment.



How is your science project going?

5. Discuss a class project.

QUICK QUIZ

What Makes a Good Friend?

Which of these qualities are the most important to look for in a friend? Circle the statements you agree with.

1. She listens and cares how I feel.
2. She has cool clothes and toys.
3. She helps other people.
4. She knows all the latest gossip.
5. She's friendly to everyone.
6. The popular people are friends with her.

Answer:

A good way to tell what kind of a friend someone will be is to watch how she treats others. The odd-numbered statements describe a girl who cares about people and their feelings. If you picked mostly even-numbered statements you might not be looking deeply enough. Make sure you're interested in someone who cares about you.



FILL OUR FRIENDSHIP FILE



Tell us about the most fun you've ever had with a friend. What did you do and where? Why was it so great? Send a photo of yourself and your friend doing the activity you describe. If you could dream up any fun activity for you

and a friend to do together, what would it be? Describe this "fantasy fun" idea in 15 words or less.

We also want great photos of you with your friends, ideas for friendship tokens, and poems about friends and friendship.

Send all of your fun and friendly ideas to Friendship File, *American Girl*, 8400 Fairway Place, Middleton, WI 53562. Be sure to include the name, address, and birthday—date, month, and year—for everyone you mention.

G.2.H.M.Y.*
W.E.A.G.Y.*

*That stands for "Glad to have met you. Won't ever forget you!"
Send us your favorite sign-offs! ★

Contest

Dreamy Cakes

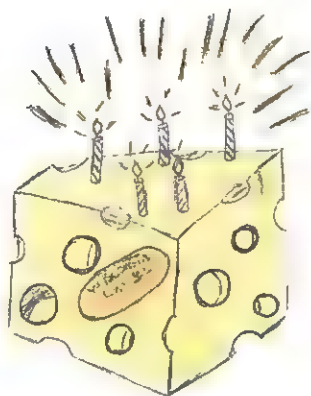
For *American Girl*'s fifth birthday, you sent us fancy cakes, sporty cakes, and cakes filled with things girls love.



I designed a cheese cake, because

American Girl is located in Wisconsin, the dairy state!

Anna Tanodra
Age 11, Washington



My cake has vanilla layers with chocolate fudge on top dripping down the sides. It has whipped cream and frosting flowers on each layer.

Emily Zittner
Age 11, California



I like to draw, so I made a really huge cake. It's orange chiffon with strawberry icing.

Jennifer Grahm
Age 14, Washington



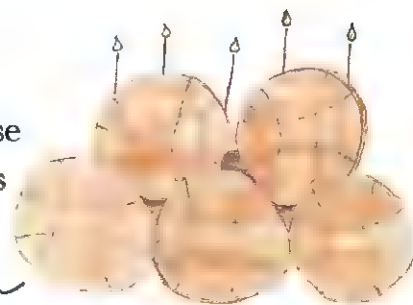
I made a lucky penny cake to wish *American Girl* good luck in future years.

Joanna Zuckerman Bernstein
Age 10, Pennsylvania



I chose a basketball cake because I play basketball. It's my favorite sport!

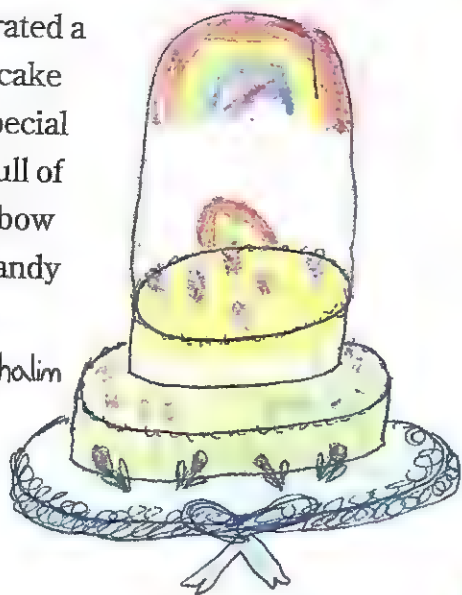
Caity Schneeman
Age 10, Minnesota





I decorated a happy cake for a special occasion. It is full of color, with rainbow flowers and a candy rainbow on top.

Maimunna Abdulhalim
Age 10, New York



On my cake the number five stands for *American Girl's* birthday, and the girls stand for everyone who sent in contests, letters, and ideas to help make the magazine.

Courtney Craig
Age 10, Louisiana



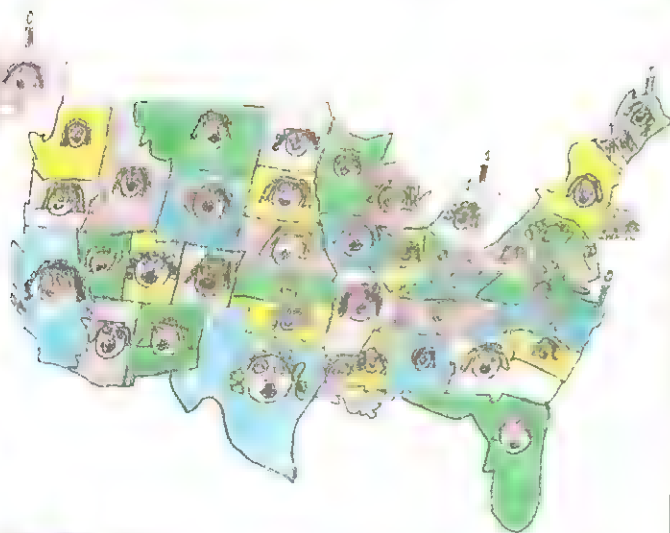
The girl on this cake represents all girls. Her hat is made of frosting!

Jenna Spinks
Age 8, California



Recipe for *American Girl's* fifth anniversary cake: creativity, kindness, help, humor, caring, love, and five years of hard work.

Shelley Miller
Age 13, Mississippi

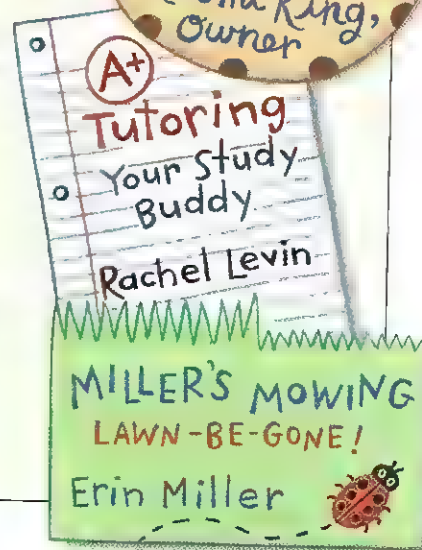
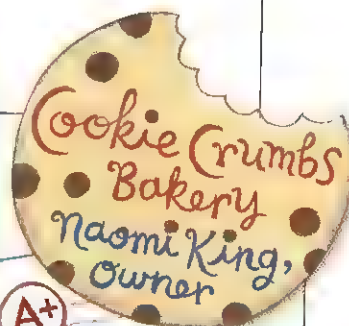


This cake is my country. I decorated it with five candles for *American Girl's* birthday, and 50 states for freedom!

Victoria Torres
Age 11, Virginia

New Contest!

A business card tells a little bit about a person's job. Make a business card for a job you'd like to have! Your card should include your name, the job, and maybe a slogan—but NOT your address or phone number, please. On a separate sheet, print your name, age, and address and tell us about your card. Send entries by October 7, 1997, to: AG Business Card Contest, 8400 Fairway Place, Middleton, WI 53562. Some cards will appear in the March/April 1998 issue. ★



The Giggle Gang

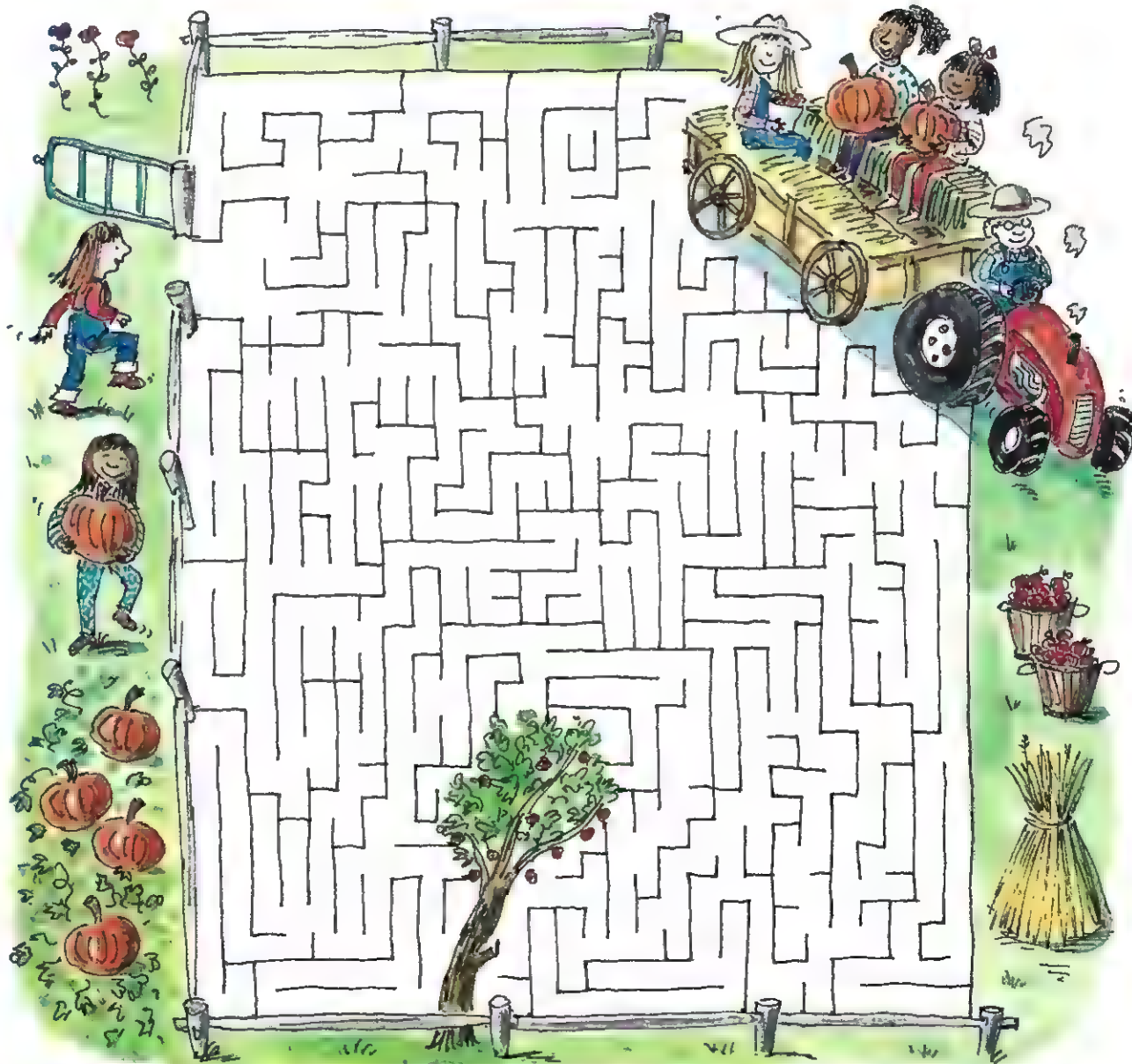


Hay, It's a Maze!



The Giggle Gang girls are going on a hayride. Help them find their way through the orchard, then see who will be waiting for

them back at the gate! The girls must enter and leave the orchard through the same gate.



Why did the girls wear bathing suits to school? They rode in a car pool.

Hannah Vail Where did the kittens go on their class trip? A mew-seum.

Mandy Cook

Age 10, California

Age 12, Tennessee

What do you call a spelling bee in Alaska? A cold spell.

Jessica Clark
Age 12, California

Why did the firefly get bad grades in school?

All answers on page 46.

Back-to-School Crossover Puzzle

All the answers in this puzzle share at least one letter with the other words on the same

line. Read the clues, then fill in the squares. We've given you the first two answers.

1. This person is the head of the school.
2. It wakes you up on time.
3. A place to keep your supplies in school.

¹p r i n c i p ²a l a r m c ³l o c k



4. You get high ones if you work very hard.
5. You sit at this to do your schoolwork.
6. Some girls wear this as part of their school uniform.

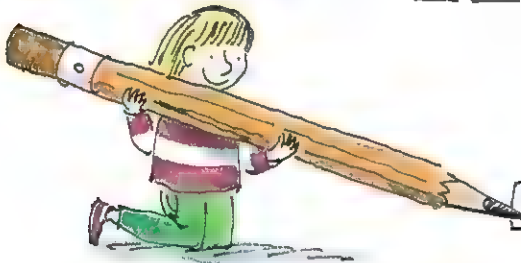
4 5 6

7. Schools have many of these, including "Don't eat in the library."

8. Many schools start classes in this month.

9. This helps you correct mistakes.

7 8 9



10. You try to get 100 percent on your spelling _____.

11. Doing this helps you prepare for a quiz.

12. Where P.E. takes place.

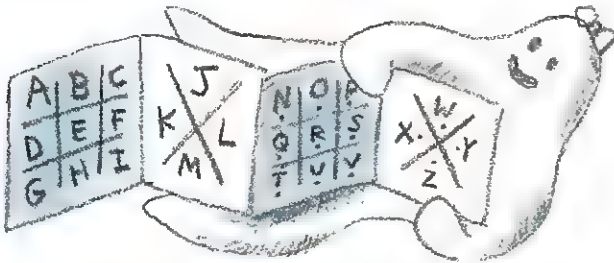
10 11 12



AG Code



Use the decoder to unscramble the riddle on the right.



What do ghosts put on top of their sundaes?

✓ □ ▢ ◡ ◡ ◡ ◡

W _ _ _ _ _

◡ ◡ ◡ ◡ ◡ ◡ ◡

_ _ _ _ _



It wasn't very bright. *Monique Romero* What math problems does your father teach you? *Daddition. Eileen Esposito*

Illinois

Age 12, Florida

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1997

45

Why do ghosts make good cheerleaders? They have lots of spirit. *Kara Popi* Why didn't the skeleton cross the road? It had no guts. *Casey Warrick*

Age 10, Connecticut

Age 8, Maryland

The Giggle Gang

Monster Mishmash

Brigitte Bechtel of Oklahoma sent in this game she and her dad made up. Play it with one or more friends, or even by yourself!

Using each letter in the alphabet, take turns giving descriptions of a monster. For example: **A**pe feet, **B**ony fingers, **C**lothes are rags, **D**ances funny, **E**ars of a bunny... Imagine the frightful sight!

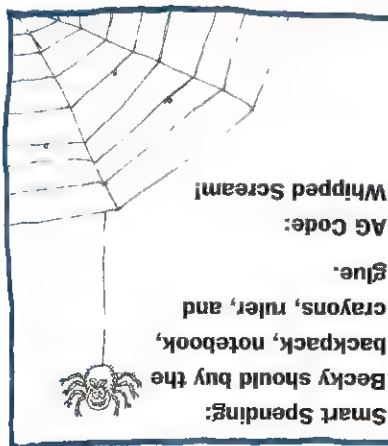


Smart Spending



Becky wants to buy school supplies. She has exactly \$20 to spend. Which five things should she buy if she doesn't want any change left over?

Answer Box



The buzzword, elucidate, is used on page 27.
Back-to-School Crossover
Puzzle: 1. principal, 2. alarm clock, 3. locker, 4. grades, 5. desk, 6. skirt, 7. rules, 8. September, 9. eraser, 10. test, 11. studying, 12. gym.



What do you call a girl with a dictionary in her back pocket? Smarty pants.

Lala Kasimova

What would you get if you

crossed a werewolf with a snowball? Frostbite.

Jessy Liddell

Age 11, Utah

What do your teacher and parents have in common? They both give you homework.

Age 12, New Jersey

Teacher: What would you do if a man-eating monster was chasing you? Cindy: Nothing, I'm a girl! Becky Baehrend Where do bats get cleaned? In a bat tub. Stephanie Kasinski

Age 10, Illinois

Age 9, Pennsylvania

HELP!

Dear American Girl,

I get red—real red!—in the face when I get up in front of the class. People call me beet-face!

Beet Red

People's bodies react differently to being nervous. Some people get sweaty. Some get a little shaky.

And some kids—like you—just blush. You can't stop yourself from blushing when you're nervous, but with practice, you may be able to feel less nervous to begin with.

Read your report to your friends or family before you have to do it in class. Then, when it's time for the real thing, take a d-e-e-p breath and remind yourself you're not alone.

Almost everyone gets jittery speaking in front of groups—even the kids who call you beet-face!



Dear American Girl,

I'm having a Halloween party. One of my friends who was not invited found out. I explained that I could only invite so many kids and I will have her over sometime. But she's still mad. What should I do?

Party pooped



If you've explained the situation nicely, there's not much more you can do. Just keep being warm to your friend—and absolutely, positively keep your promise to have her over. The more you show her she's still special to you, the more quickly her hurt will heal.



Dear American Girl,

Whenever we have a project, the teacher signs us up with a partner. Just one problem: my partners always leave the work to me!

Getting Tired

Try these tips: 1. Agree on what each of you will do, then write it down for you both to sign. A signature is a promise that you'll do what you said you'd do. 2. Use both people's talents. Make sure

each of you gets to do things you're good at. 3. Be sure to listen—really listen!—to your partner's ideas. Then make sure the project includes his or her suggestions. People work *much* harder on projects they helped dream up.



Dear American Girl,

My parents think I need to be perfect. If I get a B instead of an A, they make a big fuss over it. It's important to get good grades, but they're overdoing it.

Not Perfect

Parents can't help it: they want the best for their kids, and that's what makes them push. They also may focus on grades when what they really want is just to be sure you're trying your hardest. Still, most parents also know it isn't possible to be best at *everything*. So talk with your mom and dad and ask if, together, you can choose the subjects where it's crucial for you to shine. They may be more accepting of your grades if they're sure you're reaching for the stars where it counts.

MORE HELP!

Dear American Girl,

When I'm at my friend's house, I act like a little angel. But when I'm at home I'm a little devil!

What should I do?

Dr. Jekyll and Ms. Hyde

When you're a guest, you get attention just for being a sweet, nice kid. But at home, when everyone's busy, you may feel you need to act up to get noticed. Try speaking up instead! When you feel yourself getting squirrely, say nicely, "I need a hug," or, "I'd like to talk." Even if no one's available right away, you'll feel better putting your feelings into words. Your family will feel better, too, and that may help you get the attention you want—for being a sweet, nice kid.



Dear American Girl,

A mean girl at school won't leave me alone! My mom says, "Just try ignoring her." Been there, done that about 20 times!
Miserable

It takes nerves of steel to tune out someone who's deliberately tormenting you. And it may not stop this girl. But it can help you



handle her behavior better. First, tell her firmly that her actions say everything about what kind of person she is, and nothing about who you are, so you're not going to pay attention to her. Then don't. Imagine she's a pane of glass and look right through her! If her actions make you feel unsafe, it's time to get a teacher or other adult involved.



Dear American Girl,

All of a sudden, I seem to think my parents are really embarrassing. When I say, "Can you please not do that, it's embarrassing," they take it as an insult!

Cringe!

Ever looked at anything through a microscope? Even the teeny-tiniest specks look huge and weird. But if

you look at them without the microscope . . . poof! They're invisible. That's kind of how it is with parents. To you, the things they do seem huge and humiliating. To other kids, they're hardly noticeable. So relax and let your parents be themselves. No one will make a big deal of it if you don't.



Advice from You

"I have some advice for girls who are saving money for something. If you are saving money for a cat, for example, cut a picture of a cat out of a magazine and tape it to your bank. That way, if you want to take money out of the bank, you'll think twice because you really want that cat!"

Emily Brown
Age 11, Wisconsin

Need advice? Write:
Help!

American Girl

8400 Fairway Place
Middleton, WI 53562



Sweatshop, by George Biddle, 1936

Imagine *how wonderful it would be to go to school.*

It's September, 1911. The other kids in your New York City neighborhood are back at school. But you and your little sister Rose must go to work.

Ever since your father died, you and your mother have been struggling to survive. Each morning before dawn, the three of you walk to the sweatshop, the dirty, crowded building where you work. Sometimes you have to hide from the truant officers who scour the streets. They say that children have to go to school, but your family would starve without the money you earn.

By the time your friends sit down at their school desks, you've been working for hours. Your job is to finish the dresses made by the women. Over and over you reach for a dress, pull out the long basting threads, reach for another. After an hour your back aches and your eyes burn. By lunchtime you're too exhausted to eat.

Walking home from the sweatshop at dusk, your sister's hand in yours, you catch sight of a star, high above the city, and make a wish. *Some-day*, you promise yourself, *I will go to school.* ★



American Girl

Coming up in the November/December issue



Deck the Halls!

Spruce up the house with decorations
you can make



Three Ladies Dancing

Behind the scenes at a school
for ballet dancers



Jingle Bells, Turkey Smells . . .

Winners of the Thanksgiving
Song Contest



Plus:

More of Amelia's adventures
and a new Friendship File

